

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Webster defines public relations as “the methods and activities employed in persuading the public to understand and regard favorably a person, business or institution; the degree of understanding and favorable regard achieved.”

Thousands of businesses spend millions of dollars each year on public relations. The first rule for successful public relations people is to be sold on their product and/or service. The same applies to members of the largest, most active and most productive Career and Technical Student Organizations interested in Business Education in the world! If you are proud of your organization, your chapter, yourself...it is a cinch that everyone else will be. Good public relations start with each and every member. It is essential to have good public relations within your own chapter before you can “spread the word.”

FBLA does not stand apart from the life of your school or community. It is part of the community and should relate to it. One of the most important things FBLA members can learn is how to relate to others, to the community and to the businesses in which they work now and in the future.

WAYS TO GENERATE PUBLIC RELATIONS

Your chapter should involve and be involved with the school (other students, faculty and administration), with parents, with public officials in your community, with civic and other student organizations, with alumni (former FBLA members now assuming a role in the community), with media professionals and with business and industry leaders. The following list of suggestions may be of value in generating public relations.

Use nametags, pins, blazers or sweaters to identify FBLA members in a positive and professional manner.

- Publicize upcoming events. You may wish to develop a listing of local news media. Utilize your computer systems for networking and records management needs. Perhaps you can fax or e-mail press releases to selected media people.
- Develop and distribute literature and other materials about FBLA and Business Education.
- Present programs about FBLA and about Business Education to civic and service groups in and around your community.
- Develop promotional exhibits around school and community.
- Display materials about FBLA in and out of school—superintendent’s office, Chamber of Commerce, guidance department, local businesses, etc.
- Provide pictures of FBLA activities and members for school newsletter and yearbook.
- Set up bulletin board and showcase displays of chapter and individual awards and projects.
- Develop spot announcements, interviews and question/answer discussions for local radio and television and other appropriate media.
- Provide photographs, news releases, editorials, feature stories and letters to the editor for school and community newspapers.
- Make announcements about FBLA and Business Education in daily bulletins to student body.
- Invite community resource people to FBLA chapter meetings, banquets and Business Education classes and activities.
- Invite community resource people to participate on steering of advisory or focus committees.
- Distribute certificates of deserved appreciation to individuals who contribute to FBLA and Business Education.
- Provide tokens of appreciation for a variety of school and community employees.
- Be active and positive members of a variety of volunteer activities not only as an individual, but as a representative of FBLA.

WISCONSIN FBLA E-BULLETIN

The elected state reporter's major responsibility is to publish Wisconsin's state newsletter, the Wisconsin FBLA e-Bulletin. The Wisconsin FBLA e-Bulletin (WFeB) contains articles submitted by local chapters, letters from local and state officers and general education material. It is a main responsibility of the local chapter reporter to write and submit these articles to the state reporter before the publication deadlines.

FBLA WEEK

Like any other activity, the success of FBLA Week depends on careful planning. Select your committees early and start making detailed arrangements for activities. Have a plan for each day of FBLA Week. Divide the responsibilities among several committees and members. **Involve all members!**

Valuable public relations media to use during the FBLA Week include the school website, newspapers, radio and television. News reporters are always looking for good news about students—so take advantage! Chapter members may get some ideas for FBLA Week activities from these suggestions.

- Obtain FBLA Week proclamation(s) from your mayor or governing official. Provide picture(s) and news stories for local media.
- Communicate with community leaders telling them about your chapter activities and plans for FBLA Week.
- Prepare a special FBLA exhibit for store windows, schools, libraries, airports, sports events, professional centers and offices, billboards, shopping centers and malls and other places where people gather.
- Contact civic and service organizations and make arrangements for members to appear on their programs. Use PowerPoint presentations, videos and other media to explain the purpose and value of FBLA and business education.
- Host an open house. Demonstrate what competencies are learned through classroom, on the job and FBLA learning opportunities.
- Conduct a tour of students' work sites to demonstrate to community residents the utilization of Business Education curriculum.
- Contact local businesses to sponsor advertising for a special FBLA section in the local newspaper. Work out the details with advertising professionals to provide an additional learning opportunity for members.
- Sponsor a guest speaker for all students.
- Invite recent graduates to attend a meeting and discuss with members their experiences in choosing a career, acquiring a position and using the skills and knowledge of Business Education.
- Select and install an honorary member into your chapter.
- Conduct a membership drive to increase the total number of involved members in your chapter—including alumni and professional members.
- Prepare and distribute a special FBLA newsletter. Share a copy of it with state staff.
- Design and display at least one FBLA Week bulletin board.
- Invite neighboring FBLA chapters to collaborate with your chapter in a recreational event—perhaps include other CTSO chapters to develop an “annual event.” They could include those within your school, local technical college and colleges and universities.
- Use a local or state FBLA video, PowerPoint or slide presentation at a general assembly or in classrooms. An FBLA officer can answer questions.
- Host a coffee/tea hour after school for all school staff to distribute FBLA materials.
- Compose a survey and mail/e-mail to the other FBLA chapters in the state or your region to determine their FBLA Week activities. Implement those that you feel fit your chapter and members' objectives and goals.

Wisconsin FBLA Event Guidelines

- Sponsor a field trip for the citizens who need extra assistance to provide them an opportunity of acquainting them with businesses and FBLA.
- Make Valentine's Day tray favors using the FBLA emblem for hospitals and health care centers.
- Work with middle and elementary schools to promote FBLA.